

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 NEW DE 06713 01 OF 02 101326Z POSS DUPE  
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00  
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02  
FAA-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /064 W  
-----101729Z 114520 /44

R 101223Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3303  
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 6713

ROME FOR RCAA

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAIR IN  
SUBJECT: CIVAIR: AIRBUS ECONOMICS/RELIABILITY

REF: STATE 005609

1. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE ENTITLED AIRBUS CREW FACE MANY SNAGS,  
APPEARED IN THE MAY 10 EDITION OF THE TIMES OF INDIA.

QUOTE

2. THE INDIAN AIRLINES AIRBUS CREW ARE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THEIR  
BEING ASKED TO FLY THE AIRCRAFT WITH SEVERAL SNAGS. THEY HAVE  
HAD TO COPE WITH NUMBER OF EMERGENCIES IN FLIGHT ON ALL THREE  
AIRBUSES.

3. THE CREW MEMBERS, MOSTLY SENIOR EXECUTIVE PILOTS, HAVE  
WRITTEN TO IA'S TOP MANAGEMENT AND URGED IT TO TAKE IMMEDIATE  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 NEW DE 06713 01 OF 02 101326Z POSS DUPE

STEPS TO IMPROVE MAINTENANCE OF THE AIRCRAFT.

4. A SENIOR PILOT, WHO IS A DEPUTY OPERATIONS MANAGER IN DELHI,  
HAS WRITTEN TO THE DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING THAT THE DEFECTS POINTED  
OUT BY THEM ARE NOT REMOVED ON THE PLEA THAT THE NECESSARY SPARE  
PARTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE.

5. HE HAS SAID THAT THE AIRLINES HAD ACCEPTED THE MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LIST (MEL) GIVEN BY THE MANUFACTURERS WITHOUT HAVING TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION NAVIGATIONAL, COMMUNICATIONS AND GROUND SUPPORT, WEATHER CONDITIONS AND OPERATIONAL PATTERN IN THE COUNTRY.

6. HE HAS ALSO POINTED OUT A NUMBER OF SNAGS AND THE EMERGENCIES THAT HE AND OTHER PILOTS HAVE HAD TO HANDLE. SOME OF THESE COULD HAVE HAD DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES.

7. HE HAS SAID THAT ON APRIL 7 SOON AFTER ONE OF THE AIRBUSES - VT-EDX - HAD GONE THROUGH A MAJOR CHECK (11), THE PLANE WAS OFFERED FOR SERVICE. SOON AFTER THE FLIGHT FOR CALCUTTA TOOK OFF FROM BOMBAY, THE COMANDER FOUND THAT THE PLANE'S HYDRAULIC SYSTEM HAD FAILED. IT WAS SOON FOLLOWED BY STALL WARNING AND STICK SHAKER WHICH COMES ON ABOUT 10 KNOTS BEFORE THE PLANE IS ACTUALLY STALLED, LATER SLATES, WHICH PROVIDE HIGH LIFT AT SLOW SPEED AND ARE ATTACHED TO THE LEADING EDGE OF THE WING, COULD NOT BE RETRACTED. THE PITCH TRIM ALSO TRIPPED OFF.

8. AS IF THIS WAS NOT ENOUGH, SOON THERE WAS A FIRE WARNING FROM NO. 1 HOLD FOLLOWED BY FIRE WARNING FROM THE FRONT TOILET AND THE REAR CARGO HOLD. THIS WAS TOO MUCH EVEN FOR A SEASONED PILOT. HE DECIDED TO ABANDON THE FLIGHT AND RETURNED TO BOMBAY.

9. THE NEXT DAY THE SAME AIRCRAFT WAS INVOLVED IN AN INCIDENT OVER CALCUTTA WHEN THE PLANE'S UNDERCARRIAGE COULD NOT BE LOWERED BY NORMAL METHOD AND THE EMERGENCY SYSTEM HAD TO BE USED.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 NEW DE 06713 01 OF 02 101326Z POSS DUPE

10. ON ANOTHER AIRCRAFT - VT-EDV - HE AND OTHER PILOTS HAVE FOUND THE MASTER WARNING SYSTEM DEFECTIVE AND EMITTING AURAL AND VISUAL WARNING SIGNALS. CREW MEMBERS HAVE REPEATEDLY BEEN TOLD TO IGNORE THE WARNING SYSTEM AND OPERATE THE FLIGHT. PILOTS HAVE TOLD THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT THAT TO IGNORE THE WARNING SYSTEM IS MOST DANGEROUS.

11. THE DEPUTY OPERATIONS MANAGER, DELHI, HAS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THESE AIRCRAFT CONTINUED TO BE OPERATED FOR DAYS WITH MAJOR SNAGS. FOR EXAMPLE, VT-EDX CONTINUED TO BE OFFERED FOR SERVICE WITH TWO MAJOR SNAGS-FAILURE OF ALFA TRIM AND PRESSURE CONTROLLER NO. 1. STALL WARNING HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED BY SEVERAL CREW MEMBERS.

12. ON TWO OCCASIONS AIRCRAFT ALMOST STALLED. THE FLIGHT DIRECTOR, SOMETIMES BOTH ON THE COMMANDER'S SIDE AND THE FIRST OFFICER'S SIDE, WENT OFF. THERE WAS COMPLETE FAILURE OF INSTRUMENTS ON A DELHI-CALCUTTA FLIGHT LAST FEBRUARY. THE COMMANDER BECAME SHAKY. HIS FIRST OFFICER HAD TO HANDLE THE LANDING OF A MOST

SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT IN BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS WITH MINIMAL INSTRUCTIONS AVAILABLE.

13. THE SAME DEFECT CAME ON IN ANOTHER FLIGHT - BOMBAY-DELHI. THE COMMANDER, WHO WAS TO TAKE THIS AIRCRAFT BACK TO BOMBAY, REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE AIRCRAFT TILL THE DEFECT WAS RECTIFIED. SOON AFTER THE TAKE-OFF THE INSTRUMENTS ONCE AGAIN BEGAN CREATING PROBLEMS.

14. ALL COMMANDERS OF AIRBUSES ARE NON-UNIONISED EXECUTIVE PILOTS WHO ARE BOUND BY A CODE OF DISCIPLINE FOR OFFICERS. THE INDIAN COMMERCIAL PILOTS ASSOCIATION HAS COMPLAINED ABOUT THE MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LIST (MEL) IN THE CASE OF OTHER AIRCRAFT BUT NOT IN THIS.

15. TILL EARLY 1975 THE OPERATOR COULD NOT OFFER FOR SERVICE ANY AIRCRAFT FROM ITS BASE AFTER AN OVERNIGHT HALT UNLESS ALL REPORTED UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 NEW DE 06713 01 OF 02 101326Z POSS DUPE

SNAGS WERE RECTIFIED. SUBSEQUENTLY, AS A CONCESSION TO INDIAN AIRLINES THE DIRECTORATE-GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION ALLOWED THE OPERATOR TO CARRY FORWARD A NUMBER OF SNAGS FOR 72 HOURS. IA OFTEN STRETCHES THIS CONCESSION WITH THE RESULT THAT SOME SNAGS ARE CARRIED FORWARD FOR WEEKS.

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 NEW DE 06713 02 OF 02 101336Z POSS DUPE  
ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00  
COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02  
FAA-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /064 W  
-----101726Z 114685 /44

R 101223Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3304  
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 6713

ROME FOR RCAA

16. INVENTORY SYSTEM - PILOTS OPERATING AIRBUSES COMPLAIN THAT SNAGS IN SOME OF THESE AIRCRAFT HAVE NOT BEEN RECTIFIED FROM MID-NOVEMBER WHEN AIRBUS OPERATIONS COMMENCED. THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING BASICALLY WRONG WITH IA INVENTORY SYSTEM. REPORTED ALLEGATIONS OF KICKBACKS MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE QUANTITY OF SPARES INCLUDED IN THE PACKET AT THE TIME OF THE PURCHASE OF THE AIRCRAFT.

17. AS WAS BROUGHT OUT IN THE TURKISH AIRLINES DC-10 CRASH INQUIRY HARD BARGAINING ON PRICES CAN RESULT IN REDUCED SPARES AND LEVEL OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT.

18. INDIAN AIRLINES OFFICIALS AND AIRBUS INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES MAINTAIN THAT THE NOTICEABLE SNAGS EXPERIENCED IN AIRBUS OPERATION ARE NOTHING MORE THAN TEETHING PROBLEMS WHICH AN OPERATOR NOR A MANUFACTURER EXPERIENCES IN ANY NEW AIRCRAFT. OPERATION PERSONNEL, HOWEVER, DO NOT AGREE. ACCORDING TO THEM WHEN ONE OF THE AIRBUSES WAS BEING FERRIED FROM TOLOUSE, FRANCE, THE VHF  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 NEW DE 06713 02 OF 02 101336Z POSS DUPE

(RADIO CIRCUIT) WAS NOT FUNCTIONING. ALL EFFORTS TO RESTORE IT FAILED

.  
ON REACHING BOMBAY IT WAS FOUND THAT THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH THE RADIO SET. IT WAS THE LEADS CONNECTING THE AERIALS WHICH HAD BEEN CORRODED. ON OTHER OCCASIONS OPEN CIRCUITS HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED BECAUSE THE CIRCUITS HAD BROKEN.

UNQUOTESCHNEIDER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AIR SAFETY, AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 10-May-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977NEWDE06713  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770164-0965  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** NEW DELHI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770574/aaaacmbh.tel  
**Line Count:** 207  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 050f4597-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EB  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 STATE 5609  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 04-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2583103  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CIVAIR: AIRBUS ECONOMICS/RELIABILITY  
**TAGS:** EAIR, IN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/050f4597-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009